

## Summary

To support and substantiate my thesis, PAINTING AS A DESIRABLE OBJECT, I proceeded to an analysis of pictorial creations and theories, a logical examination of my hypotheses, and an argumentation of ideas that stretches over three parts. The first part is about making visible the image in painting. Indeed, if the essence of painting is to make visible, we can ask: What makes Fra Angelico's painting visible? What about Renaissance painting in general? What does painting make visible to Daniel Arasse? What makes abstract painting visible? What do Pollock, Cy Twombly and the extremes of conceptual art make visible? What makes Koshut visible?

In order to answer these questions, we must first answer the question: **What is the image?** For me as a painter, the image as a description of the world is another type of knowledge and way of communicating alongside those that humanity has invented or discovered throughout its history.

**The notion of image** is one that is difficult to define both in terms of the meaning of the notion, the meaning of the image idea, and in terms of the "things" we refer to. We find the departure point of any definitional attempt at Plato, for which the only images that deserve the philosopher's interest are "natural images" (shadows, reflections). But if this is the unavoidable starting point, the point of arrival is equally inevitable at Pierce, for whom the images are a specific sign, the one based on the analogy. We could mainly present pictures according to their origin - natural or artificial - by their psychological - mental or perceptual quality - or by their relationship as signs of what they represent, or by the referential quality of the analogy - ostensive, direct or metaphorical. In this thesis I will still refer to the image as a visual sign capable of signifying in an aesthetic manner, as what Roman Jakobson called a poetic function. Of course, this primary function involves the other two supposed functions of artistic messages: the expressive and impressive one.

Terms such as "Image" and "Imagery" - or even more obvious "Illustration"- show distinct usage depending on the different types of representation to which they refer. This implies a way to reject the generic definition of the image as belonging exclusively to facsimiles?? or reflections of any kind. Because some of these definitions seem to be more suitable for a category of images than others. Sometimes the archaic version of the meaning of the image, which refers to the appearance, sometimes *eikon*, seems to be more appropriate for the image of a religious veneration or fantasy, in which images of things appear as though they were present. The term imagery is used by historians in relation to the art produced in the 14th and 19th centuries. In contrast, the word image is more often used in describing the types of art produced before the Renaissance. What does image mean then to us Westerners?

I opted in the thesis for a definition of the image as proposed by Aurel Codoban in *Empire of Communication*, which is based on David Hockney's view. This idea takes into account the evolution from painting to image projection modes such as the *camera obscura*. By following this evolution, he claims that in Western modernity, images are representations that most closely resemble the visual projection in the Euclidean space. David Hockney, believes that this optical instrument makes the transition from an image that is only meant to support the (religious) story, to a profoundly descriptive image that is closer to the photographic one. The problem is no longer how to represent something, but rather about how to represent it accurately. In this view, reality means something that most closely resembles what the human eye perceives, as optical lenses are modeled after the human eye.

In the next chapter, **Imprinted Image and Mental Image**, we come back to Leonardo da Vinci's earlier idea that painting is "*un cosa mentale*", which is the essential issue for our doctoral thesis: the difference between what is visible as a projection of reality and images that seem to have a different quality such as inner images, mental dreams and hallucination. In recent years, we can see a massive development towards defining an image as being something closer to a mental picture than a projection of "reality".

Therefore, we could say that there are two directions in which images are constituted. The first one is as a way to record reality, such as photography, and the reproduction of a mental image by any possible means, which according to this thesis is the subject of art. Art - in my

case, painting - is often a mental image that seeks to obtain a prop. Painting is itself a body containing an image. And it is valuable not only for the story the image contains, but also for its body: the object with all its aspects. Thus, in painting, what we call "image" is still an artifact. As such, the limits of what one calls an image are constantly transgressed. For example, Richter's grey objects are acting as mirrors, but yet we can not say that they are not a creation of the artist, and therefore it is still an image.

Thus, according to this thesis, an image is all that the eye sees and can be conceptualized in one form or another. It is, therefore, any kind of printing of "reality". However, different environments, even if they use images taken from "reality", still produce a mental image (a way of imagining) in the end. Similarly, in the case of art, the product object may involve both the image of reality and a mental image, but also many other aspects, as suggested above, which contribute to the creation of the art object. I consider that part of the art function is precisely that of not moving nicely between the beautifully crafted boundaries of what the image should be. Rather, it is the exploration of overlooked ways of defining the image. So it is always useful to know what has already been cataloged, to be able to open ourselves to less familiar but meaningful ways. What, in the clearest and most radical form, verifies Leonardo da Vinci's old claim that painting is "*una cosa mentale*"!

The question of what the image is about sends us to the **difference between story and concept. Who and what makes visible?** It focuses on the problem of semantic content and to that of the relationship between descriptiveness and narrativity and between what and how. The images, even those created by the artist are a source of special knowledge of the narrative. At the same time, they flood all media and may even be the first source of knowledge in contemporary culture. Which is what chapter 1.2.1. **The image as an analogy: what and how it signifies** deals with. Nowadays, images have become more subtle not only at an aesthetic level, but also at the story level. Social media such as *Pinterest*, *Tumblr*, and *Instagram* allowed visual education in several social strata. So art in general and painting in particular are no longer exceptional in providing imagery. However, they are the only mediums that can offer complex, not just aesthetic, controlled experiences, to which we relate as being special and truly unique. This type

of controlled experience is more similar to the experience in meditation rather than what we have when watching a film.

Whether we are talking about image or imagery, the role of art remains to show something. The concepts that are transformed into visible metaphors or the images that illustrate a concept, all share the desire to portray something. What makes what visible? In the case of photography and imagery, does one try to represent the visible reality and does the other try to represent mental images? These are the issues that interest me in this chapter.

These ideas, do not exclude each other but rather become potentially co-existent. They can be conceptualized very well using Hockney's example - between representing something and creating a new image. In which the latter is related to the artist's perception. Or Kandinsky - which seems to think that the way you produce the image has little or no importance and that it is more important what you have to convey. Or, better, Hilma af Klint, a Swedish artist who only now receives the deserved attention due to movements that seek to recover the work of various artists that have been neglected due to their female sex. Lisa Yuskavage, on the other hand, is an artist of which we can grasp more of the meaning of the images. Perhaps because the narrative sensation it contains seems to be more obvious than what is tried to be made visible. If the image as an analogy is what convinces through its reliability, then it seems that, to a certain point, the artists focused on finding ways to produce images are as close as possible to the "reality" they perceive.

The conceptual painting works at a meta-level to this. The chapter **1.2.2. The meta-level of the image in the conceptual painting** refers to a type of painting that conceptualizes what the painted image means or what the painting is as an object. An example of this are Cy Twombly's traces. He is questioning the aesthetics of painting, but also what the image means to viewers. He questions the painting as a significant object as well as what the image is. His traces/gestures are neither text nor painting: they are placed in the area of painting because of the framing we automatically assume.

The meaning of the image as an indexical analogy, and that of painting as meta-image, make photography and its use in artistic creation even more visible as a visual instrument. Many artists use photography to create images but also as a direct quotation: Christian Boltanski in

installations (without the images being made by him), Richter (the ability of his figurative pictures to tell a story), and Hockney (which is related to what namely occurs). The image that Richter, Hockney and Boltansky use come with the significance and credibility with which we view photography as an symbolic icon of reality. However, the significance of the image is only an addition to the artwork. Its ultimate goal is to produce a meta-image that contains the first one.

To build on this, chapter 1.2.3. focuses on **Painting can do things that photography can not do**. There are many artists working with different mediums, and the combination of them are no longer surprising. However, the way in which different artists use these mediums is of great importance. If we consider the way Gerhard Richter uses the photographic image, Hockney appears to have another concern - a rather technical one, such as "how does the image appear on the support?" "In what way is something represented to be in agreement with our perception?" For example, in his famous photo collage "Pearblossom Hwy., 11-18th April 1986, # 2", he builds a new image, using the photographic image he has aiming almost to create a correction of it.

What deserves attention is Hockney's work is his interest in bringing the representation closer to our perception of space. In an interview, he claims that painting can do things that photography can not do, even when it comes to telling the truth about war. Everyone used to assume that the photographs of the war were "true" in a way that painting ? can not be. But Hockney argues that the digital age has made such a concept of photography obsolete. Nonetheless, Hockney is an artist related to the photographic image, even though that means that he is more likely to show its deficiencies in relation to the image obtained through painting. His collages made from polaroid photographs appear a labour-intensive project with photographic means ?

I talk about all these aspects in the chapter 1.2.4. **Serendipity - trees tied to each other** in relation to my own artistic practice. No matter how much research one does on a particular subject, it may happen that what one is looking for is never revealed. Also, no matter how prepared one is for the novelty shown, by intuition and creativity, things are always even more surprising. In one of my visits to Belgium at the gallery I was collaborating with in 2009-2013, I came across a picture that has been at the core of my artistic practice for almost two years.

The image I'm referring to is that of the two trees tied to each other. While I have been in contact with such revelations in my artistic practice, for instance in my work "sneakers and panties", which was a real expression of a moment - I was not familiar and do not easily accept the idea of using or recognizing the visual metaphor, largely because my context seemed more related to the way I paint.

However, even after I have noticed this metaphor, it took me a long time to create some of the paintings. This period seems to have helped to strengthen the obsession needed to produce them.

I became interested in the ways I could put images on canvas or any other support. I had the intention to produce naturalist paintings and interpretations that do not contain much of what could be recognised as a tree, one example being the black one with the cylinder trunks. They are not necessarily linked to each other, the one to which they are bound is completely lacking. The alternation between the negative and the positive forms is in this case an important part of the work, as well as the part in which what seemed to be the subject of the image, i.e. the link between the trunks, is nonexistent.

This is a good example of what is represented in the image, and how I built the image. It shows a new concept, different from what was seemed to be conveyed in the original image. From an image that promised to be the two trunks linked together, we obtained one whose part that connects them seems to dissolve in the stylistic interpretation itself.

Moreover, this "painting" is somewhere at the limit of drawing and painting because of monochrome black and white and the paper, a support most often used for drawing. At the same time, monochroma is obtained from techniques specific to painting I used spray here as a paint application method and a masking tape. As the image becomes part of the installation, it looks like the picture is more of an accident than deliberately built, as if it is just a paper that was somewhere where the paint fell on it. The way one chooses to expose a work also is part of what it represents.

In the story of the tree alone, the shape the paint takes appears as a surprise because we considered it to be of no importance. Even so the metaphor manifests, or we recognize it when it occurs [or in unfortunate cases we lose it from our desire to do more].

The series of white works that frequently has works with the two trees, has as its starting point the rather modernist idea that an artist should be able to make a statement using only the specific means of the environment in which he or she performs their practice in this case painting. I tried to work on the implications of this idea, trying to paint the same image again and again, but trying to make sure that each image has a certain visual and semantic specificity and gravity. For example, transforming an image representing the flat part of a garden into one that contains a deep sense of tension.

Using white as the background and the main color relates to the fragility associated with the mental instability and anxiety that one feels when abandoned, either by death or by separation. The fog seems to me to be a visual metaphor better suited for this feeling than darkness, as darkness is more about the fear and solitude someone experiences without them wanting to. I am not saying that someone would desire death or separation. Nonetheless, loneliness and the desire for this loneliness can come as a reaction that allows for repositioning. The fog represents the feeling of being isolated from the world for the sake of introspection. I have tried to use the metaphorical and visual austerity potential of a foggy day.

The works on sexuality / sensuality have a theme that does not belong to me. It is a re-used theme, which images have no personal content, but still they are imposed in our inner and intimate world. I took these pictures from pornographic films because I was looking for an iconic image of sex in our world. The story they tell is not original at any level. Even the stage-lighting is one that we find in all these films, because their intention is not to create an atmosphere but to be as explicit as possible. My intention was to accenuate this clarity. and to adorn the image with an effect that could describe something other than the exercise of an anatomy.

The second part of the thesis regards **Painting as an object** and supports the thesis about the quality of the pictorial object of the painting. Chapter **2.1. From the artifact to the desirable object** outlines the different distinctions and the historical evolutions that these involve. Chapter **2.1.1. Artifact, object of desire and object of additional taste** also offers detailed initial explanations. The Painting can be considered an object, because it belongs to the

class of human artifacts. It is a cultural artifact because it is created by man with the express intention of bearing meaning. It is also an object of art, a physical object created with aesthetic or artistic intent. The term "art work" can be used in the broadest sense but the term artistic object mainly applies to the tangible and portable forms of visual art.

As an object, painting becomes the subject of desire and subject of taste. It is, of course, necessary to explain what I mean in the context of my hypotheses as "the desirable object of quality". It is different in meaning to Jacques Lacan's or Pierre Bourdieu's. My definition combines them both. The painting is at the same time an object of desire meant to complete the being of the viewer and the possessor as well as an object of class taste. The first and second part of my thesis complement one another and explain what represents painting in its totality, in my vision and my artistic practice.

Painting as a desirable object is both an object of desire taken in sight by sight, and an object of desire of class taste, acquired by acquisition. The best example to understanding this perspective, is the still life.

What this thesis underlines is not that painting or art generally has only this main characteristic or that the idea represented in painting, its semantic content, is of no importance. Rather this element is considered to be present, intentionally or not, in all works. It is an intrinsic feature of the art object. Painting is not only a two-dimensional image, but is the object of image, support, and technique used.

In chapter 2.1.2. **The significance of the descriptive image in the 17th century "still life" in the Netherlands** is placed at the most concrete level of my hypothesis and argumentation. With the still life a shift takes place from what the painting presents to the painting itself as a desirable object. We do not want the picture of the painting, the meaning, but we want the painting in its pictorial materiality, the signifier. It is not about an abstract signifier, but about a signifier in his artistic concreteness. That is to say, the painted canvas, the sensuality of pictorial signs, matter, or metaphorically about the alchemy of painting.

On the other hand, I have taken the still life an example because it seems to be the most relevant representation type, and with which we can clearly see the relationship between the artist, who produces the image and the public / collector, who is the acquirer of this product



according to his wishes, defined by what he wishes to see, not only by what he is supposed to see. The Dutch society is the first in this sense, who is proud of its possessions. I do not want to insist on the socio-psychological aspects that religion or social structure imply for the individual in this respect, even though they are a factor that may lead to certain exceptions. Yet I consider it essential at first to understand the general pattern in which a society develops its relationship with the image.

In order to get closer to what I consider to be the origins of this kind of understanding painting as an object / painting - in the sense that Victor Ieronim Stoichita uses - and the aspect of its desirability, I took as a reference *The Art of Describing* by Svetlana Alpers. Here, she draws attention to the way in which The Nordic countries judge the images and how this is related to the pattern in which they have reported their production. This can be seen in the paintings of Jan Davidsz De Heem, Willem Kalf, Willem and Pieter Claesz Heda, Jan van Huysum and others.

"Reading" or analyzing images is an important source of viewing of what the model of imagery represents in the art of Northern countries, but many socio-political and cultural aspects can be at least as relevant. Huygens' writings on the Dutch/Flemish Society of the seventeenth century contribute to an understanding of what Alpers will call the "Keplerian model", as being different from the Albertinian model in which the image is something mathematically built to be understood. In this case, the attitude of society towards the act of seeing and the importance attached to the apparatus itself become crucial points in understanding this type of image production. Here we discover a decisive factor, influenced by the understanding of how the eye works, for the attitude of the Nordic society towards the most faithful representation of nature.

The image constructed by the Dutch seems to be exactly what Johannes Kepler defined mathematically as "retinal image formation". However, Kepler's discoveries in optics are not the only ones that make that difference. His interest is also based on other social components. It is not a coincidence that the artists' appetite for optical devices were at the same time as contemporary discoveries. This is also noted in the terminology used by Kepler in describing how the image is formed on the retina: the image is "painted" on the retina. Therefore, the image

has a special role in Dutch culture, as it is something other than text. It is not enough to comprehend reality through words: the image is the only one capable of real disclosure.

The way the telescope and the microscope displace the perception that man is the measure of all things is essential to understanding the Dutch model. The way things are measured, or the way a proportion is set for them, becomes relative. Man is no longer the one that determines the proportions of things. Man is part of a vast empire of nature. Unlike the Renaissance art in Italy, which is more interested in the narrative ), the art of the Nordic countries is rather contoured by what the image itself means. The image is a concrete and indisputable part of education.

Because of the Protestant dogma, especially in the Netherlands, religious symbolism is moved into small things. God is in nature and the way it develops, which inevitably transforms the type of image produced. his perspective is developed in **2.1.3. Religious and pictorial symbol of detail**, where one reads how static nature, being linked to "description" rather than "narrative," implies certain religious attitudes.

At the risk of seeming expeditious, I believe that this aspect determines the "disappearance" of some themes, on the one hand, or rather turns exceptions to those who practice them - artists interested in the historical theme being also placed in a special category - and, on the other hand, makes others have a new meaning. Static nature is one of the themes whose perception changes because the message transmitted by them remains somewhere in the same area if we consider Vanitas as a religious theme that can assume the return to God. Even if the static natures, whose symbolism is intended to be of a spiritual nature, the attention of the Dutch painters seems to be captured by the rendering of materialities or the way the painting will look at the end.

We consider inevitable the themes approached by artists such as the human condition in the face of death, because they are primarily concerned with universality. The subjects are truisms that can be detached from their meaning. Certainly the metaphor that tells us all of this can be accounted for. But more impressive is the way in which this metaphor is made. Its impact is due to our way of reacting to visual stimuli - too few of us are accustomed to build images for

what we are told. Inevitably the image of a skull will represent the death of man in any culture, and the combination of such symbols is not a novelty.

Is not that just the minimization of the "important" themes in favor of the focusing on the painting itself? Without minimizing the importance of the symbol throughout this scheme, one can argue that the themes and symbols are repeated. There is a recipe for what should be represented. The universality of the symbol is simply the one that works best.

Chapter 2.1.4. **The objectifying of painting by the art market** argues that shows people in Amsterdam were simply obsessed with having things, which explains the objectual status of painting. Collecting art is then about the object, not about what is represented. Painting is most susceptible to this, because it is an easily maneuverable object, loaded with history. This link to history makes it beautiful and excuses the cost.

The Dutch urge to collect rare objects is probably also rooted in the fact that Amsterdam was during colonial times a center where you could buy things from other parts of the world. In the context of emerging trade, art becomes an increasingly attractive product, which arouses the viewer's desire for possession and has led the public to choose art for personal reasons. Finally, the implications of aesthetics of exposure have led painters to produce works aiming to please the tastes of consumers. The modern methods of collecting and capitalizing on painting has its roots in this change in aesthetic priorities. This thesis shows this phenomenon by analyzing Frans Snyders's pictorial production. Yet the most relevant metaphor for the essence of the whole situation is a trompe-l'oeil of the Flemish artist Cornelius Norbertus Gijsbrechts painted between 1668-1672.

Another aspect that should be mentioned is the pride of artists regarding their technical capabilities. There is a kind of pleasure in the realization of the image. Nordic artists are inclined to produce images describing the world, so having the knowledge needed to achieve these representations falls into the category of craftsmanship that one can prove. Technical skills do not come from a particular kind of school, so someone who wants to become a "master" needs time and exercise to acquire it.

Dutch still life is for the public,. The appearance of the need for a society to expose its possessions makes static nature a bourgeois one. Indeed, it needs the individuals who acquire it

just as contemporary painting needs the public. The topic addressed in this case is the desire of the public rather than the ardent need of the artist to represent. The talk revolves around the society that appreciates the works, not about the artist's own autonomy. Yet it is interesting how the artist manages to persuade through objects that are irrelevant to someone other than the artist, such as the boots painted by van Gogh. I think this is influenced by the way in which the public perceives the pictorial environment. The painting ennobles the object, an almost indisputable art, without the need for a subject to use it.

"Vanitas" and the symbolism of objects are in the eyes of the viewer not the necessary condition for an image to exist as a pictorial work. This technical ability to accurately transform a three-dimensional image onto the two-dimensional surface of the cloth and the use of color, as someone like Willem Claesz Heda, can convince that any object painted in that way is sufficient.

In line with this, the collection and acquisition of rarities is not a novelty, as it existed before the art market itself in the form of the *Wunderkammer*, the curiosity cabinet. The role of the art object is thus that of any weirdness of nature. Painting is here the object of desire but also the means, the instrument of displaying wealth, both material and intellectual.

So, in the case of the seventeenth century Holland, we have a society that we can consider as an exception by the way in which it has been related to the production of images and which is itself a point of influence for the world of contemporary art, which is constituted as the complex variant of the 17th century art market. Through this study, I have not tried to convince myself that the Dutch and Flemish societies are the only ones who had artists to produce other images. On the contrary, we keep in mind that artists dealing with the reproduction of objects, thus producing the kind of static nature, have been found in other parts of Europe. This situation leads us to believe that a change in the perception of the public over what art as a discipline should generally offer. We do not think that the way artists reproduce the image is the element that would be the key to these changes; on the contrary, the way the image is used is related to other segments of life, such as religion, political action, etc. Perhaps more, artists who deal with the pictorial sensuality of the painted surface can be found in the early 18th century in France where Jean-Baptiste Simeon Chardin concerned only with this aspect of the painting of objects

accomplishes what we call here that desirable object, the type of his painting being the most sensual and delicious, we could say which the history of the works of artists has ever met.

What Schapiro says about van Gogh - "Comparing van Gogh with other artists, we can say that few would have chosen to dedicate a whole cloth to their own isolated shoes, and still addressing a cultivated viewer" - is what could be written about painting objects without any final significance of the image, leaving only this aspect of painting as an object in which the image is capable of seduction. I often find that, for the sake of a story, we overlook this belief is fundamental to the painting. Our belief in words that it is above what the image can reveal is still deeply rooted in the general concept of art. It seems to be a constant struggle not to yield to the temptation that offers this sensuality.

It remains to be seen how these aspects, which I took into consideration in this study, influence the production of painting even in our century, and in what way is the artist invented or described. Surely, how the reproduction of objects increased and how they took this kind of image production, the artists who followed, is vital in understanding the painting of today. As far as I'm concerned, I only have to find the most appropriate form to represent the idea that I propose.

In subchapter **2.1.5. Painting as a desirable object** - conclusions to a historical definition I can see why I do not think that it has sufficiently meddled on the quality of the object of the artefact, especially if this artefact is the painting of painting. The painting really contains an image, but the image also contains photography and sculpture and perhaps many other forms of art or fashion design, fashion etc. But the artist has to decide his art, that is, he must decide the way he uses the image, that is, the way the body gives it. The easiest can exemplify what I mean by this object quality of the painting with abstract painting that before discussing the particularities of each work or series of works, it is more about the plastic signs, and thus brings us aesthetic perception with the feet on the earth, that is, the level of what painting is like an artistic object, which is exemplified by the painting of Jackson Pollock and the ideas of Kazimir Malevich.

Chapter **2.2. The alchemy of painting as a genetic definition of a pictorial object** is a metaphor that leads to my broadest idea of painting as a desirable object. In his book, What Is

Painting, James Elkins, makes a delicious comparison between what painting, activity, interest of the artist, and what was alchemy. The comparison is the more delicious the more I admit in some of my remarks games of imagination that I myself live when thinking about this process

Painting - like other visual arts - is a perfect example for bargaining between water and stone, the rest is Alchemy. In alchemy, the Stone, is the ultimate goal, and one of the purposes of alchemy is to convert something fluid such as water into a solid substance that can not be melted like stone. It is also in painting, the materials from which it starts are liquid and the end is solid. As in painting, most of the alchemy has nothing to do with stone or pure water itself, but with mixtures of the two. Alchemists worked with viscous mixtures, with bad smells, with fragile surfaces, in short, they were preoccupied with substances similar to those of painters or other artists.

Here we are not talking about paintings in the sense of their image, but about the act of painting and about the thoughts, the actions that will be embedded in painting, in the paste applied. The painting records the most delicate gestures but also the most tense. It is the projection of the artist's movements, the portrait of the artist's thoughts and movements. The viscous state of paintwork is the mood of the painter, and their transformation into images is the unexpected discoveries of the artist. Painting is a dialogue, hard to interpret, where the paint transmits silently in paste and colors, and the artist responds with his mood. All these meanings are intact in all the paintings, they keep the memory of the tired bodies they have done, the quick gestures, the exhaustion rest, and all the gestures of the caring. Painters know these movements just before they know what that painting will be like.

Finally, what is painting? Is the framed object, with its entourage of historical significance, the gossip about the painter, the registers, the letters, the files, the reports, the comments and the books that inspire him? Or painting is a name for what happens when the paint is applied to an empty surface? None is complete without the other, but I hope to convince that it is not enough to abuse an idea and neglect the latter. Before any painting is the surface to be painted, whether it is a canvas stretched on a chassis, a wooden stand prepared to be painted, or in the simplest way, a paper and the paint, the paste, the pigment to be applied to it.

Chapter 2.3. **The interest in how it is painted rather than what is painted** strengthens the perspective developed here. Its first consolidation gives it somewhat outward perspective because it comes from aesthetic theories and art criticism. In subchapter 2.3.1. **Against the primacy and excess of interpretation in the reception of painting**, at the suggestion of the artist Lisa Yuskavage introduce the ideas of Susan Sontag from the essay *Against Interpretation*. I find this text particularly important for my thesis, since from a theoretical perspective I propose what I am trying to support in this thesis from the perspective of the artist who practices his art. Indeed, the way Susan Sontag abolishes the excessive emphasis on content and meaning in favor of direct, sensory and even sensual contact with the work of art appears as a powerful argument from theory in favor of my hypothesis. Susan Sontag says that the function of criticism should be to show what it is rather than to show what it means, and the immediate conclusion is: "In place of a hermeneutics we need an erotics of art."

Of course, since 1964, when Susan Sontag wrote these lines, what the interpretation has changed quite a lot. Heidegger removed the interpretation of the theological and ontological hermeneutics, and structuralism and post-structuralism laid the foundations for a possible understanding of the work of art that the semiotic machine. But as far as I am concerned, this attitude towards content consciously, so easy, is an attitude to which I subscribe.

In the next subchapter, 2.3.2. **Other historical examples of painting objections**, this time, bring examples from the history of modern Western art. In 2.3.2.1. **From modern art to abstract painting - a process of purification that highlights the objectification of painting**, the paintings of the impressionists - Manet, Cezanne - and the Cubists - Georges Braque, Pablo Picasso, and Juan Gris are examples. In 2.3.2.2. **Painting and photography** - the quality of the object of David Hockney's painting, the accent falls on one of the privileged artists in my thesis, and in 2.3.2.3. **Gerhard Richter - Painting, photography and objects** on another.

In the third part, **How is the painting loaded of its own history**, I am concerned to understand and explain how exactly I understand that the painting is "loaded" by its own history. It is important to explain in subchapter 3.1. **The image as a battery of meanings and meanings**, in what way is the image accumulating meaning. The levels of significance

established by Pierre Francastel, especially the "figurative order" is similar to Foucault's epistemes, is the closest to how history penetrates the significance of the pictorial work.

However, Walter Benjamin, who speaks of the aura of the artistic object, as the bearer of the sign of the history to which the work is subjected, belongs to the most appropriate concept in this respect. The uniqueness of its appearance and existence being the essential ideas in this case.

The basic idea is that the art object is produced and consumed through the perspective of tradition and what we, the public, and the artists know about art in relation to its past.

However, I would point out that one of the complications is that we can only know with the passage of time what is significant in the art that is produced. Aesthetic experience is insufficient to determine the value of the work.

What seems to be worthwhile in this case as an artist is how you can try validating, sticking to what Western painting - or the Corpus of Western painting - means as an "artistic" environment.

I use a review of the book written by Frank Stella, in which James Elkins notes how artists use history and especially the history of images, honestly tied to supporting their own artistic practice rather than the classic research attempt in which the student is trying to understand the past. Stella's reflection on past artists is a pragmatic one, in the sense of using them as examples to use as a "profit." Here, too, the idea that artists are quoting, to colleagues, pictures, or pieces of images, or plastic signs.

In this regard, I note that the painting itself is used for this capacity. Examples that come to my mind are Jeff Koons, who also adds paintings to his project, Made in Heaven, or Martin Kippenberger's "Dear painter, Paint me (Lieber Maler, male mirror)" project. Damien Hirst is an artist who does not miss the use of the painting environment and is always ingenious in this respect.

I thus show that the use of stylistic quotes, colors, signs of already recognized artists works as a takeover from a vast array of plastic elements to which artists constantly appeal, sometimes relying on the conclusions of other artists without thinking about these solutions. This type of attempt to find validation is easy but often very effective in the short term.



The death of originality is one of the ideas that occur recurrently as we turn to the same "archive" and it is dedicated to subchapter **3.2. The death of originality, the feeling that everything that could be done has already been done**. Recycling and quoting refers to my understanding that what is happening in the contemporary world is rather a resumption in some way of ideas already examined, questioned by other artists, sometimes under the pretext that originality is no longer a necessary attribute constituent of the work of art. In fact, the ideas of movement in the most fashionable or stronger theories of art are that there is no originality, or that it is no longer part of the artistic, pictorial process - or that it should no longer be part of this process - for to build a work worth taking seriously.

In this context, I notice a reversal of the direction of creation. If the artist is ideally concerned with a certain problem that he searches and raises through all his methods, thus elaborating his work which is related to the past of the environment as a natural consequence of his knowledge, things seem to incline towards building something starting from existing and appreciated works because that would be the appreciated trend.

So this re-use not only illustrates the old art or pieces of it, but it can also be regarded with skepticism because of the feeling of speculative attitude that this approach has, namely, the use as quote of pieces made by a famous artist, art seems to be used as a bait or as a green card on the road to recognition, validation.

In subchapter **3.3. The impasse in the history of painting** explains why the deadlock in the history of painting is one of my motivations in my artistic practice, being one of the aspects that fascinated me and which was the main challenge.

In this environment were made my works with the swimming pool, namely those with overlapping images. This overlap is seen as a freedom that the pictorial surface, passed through the fire of history, won in my opinion. In this context, the idea that the flat two-dimensional surface of the painting could accommodate another representation of space, not only the perspective one, that that we are accustomed to perceiving or seeing it represented in the photography or other ways of representation.

The subchapter **3.4. Dilemmas about what and how**, it's mainly a meditation about the content of the painting that I have produced, on the possible ways in which I could find in future

directions. I suggest that in this sense the study of other artists, old or new, should inform me and show me new possibilities, not limit the choices of my artistic practice.

I also point out that I have used this opportunity to write this thesis to show what I see in the pictures that interests me, as I have seen or how I imagined that other artists would do in a relationship similar to the text. What interests me now, from the perspective of this doctoral thesis, is the subject that my paintings would like to contain. This interest appears to me caused by the attitude of general circulation, that anything can be put into the art. But that "anything" must still be "something" very precise when you start working.

It seems in this context, where I often use the term art, I should explain how I use it. In this regard, I use passages from Thierry De Duve, which states that what could be called art is the way that you will be determined to collect in a certain way. We come to conclude that art is something depending on the character of the theory that conditioned you. From this perspective of defining art, I have tried to explain what is the shift of focus from what makes painting visible in the way it makes visible. In this regard, I use the example of the Netherlands, whose economic evolution has led to over-production of painting.

I dare even go as far as to say that art is a mirror of our types of thinking about various subjects at different times. And what artistic production shows us over the last ten years is that we were more interested in form than in content.

If so far I have been concerned about what and how to find out what is the one that I would better put in painting, I still care about "how" to paint from the perspective of the conclusions of the PhD thesis and these are reserved subchapter **3.5. About how to paint from the perspective of the conclusions of the PhD thesis.**

In this respect, I have noticed that in my artistic practice it is easier for me to produce something with which the ideas or concepts have no clearly defined names. What I want to say is that the artist is the one who produces, and only then what he does is somehow called, is given a name, not the other way around. I use as an example the series of paintings that uses a theme often addressed by artists, that of sexuality.

In contemporaneity, this theme has also grown because of the social discourse in this area and the acceptance of many attitudes so far. I use the example of Ambera Wellmann

because I think she is one of the most significant artists who tackle this theme and whose approach I find the most common points.

My point of view on this topic is that the easiest way you can see how an artist brings solutions when the theme is one that does not offer a lot of movement because it has been turned on all sides by artists of all time. I use the pornographic image because it seems to me to be the image of our world on sexuality.

This series of works I called *Loveology*, has as a starting point images of various pornographic films chosen by me so that they can be iconic for the way sex shows to us. In this way, using the most banal and cliché shapes, i felt forced to focus my attention on the way I paint